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SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 9 August 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria)

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Special meeting in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women of South Africa

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

SPECIAL MEETING IN OBSERVANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF WOMEN OF SOUTH AFRICA

The CHAIRMAN: In 1981, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 9 August the day commemorating the historic and heroic demonstration of women against the racist pass laws in South Africa in 1956. Since then, this day has been observed annually. On behalf of the Special Committee, I would like to thank all who have joined us in the observance of this solemn occasion.

The observance of the International Day this year has particular importance for the women and the people of South Africa. The struggling women of South Africa are openly challenging the structures of the system of apartheid. They are also participating with men in setting the stage for a new era in their country in which democratic values and the principles of human rights are respected and observed.

I would also like to welcome and express special thanks to Ms. Elsie Crum, Deputy Counsel of New York City, who will speak on behalf of Mrs. Joyce Dinkins, wife of the Mayor of New York City, and to Mrs. Gertrude Shope and Mrs. Elizabeth Sibeko from South Africa, who have kindly accepted our invitation to address the meeting.

I would now like to make a statement on this special occasion on behalf of the Special Committee.

Today we mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women of South Africa. In so doing, we honour all women who have courageously challenged the oppression of the apartheid system and have dared to dream of a new society based on democracy, social justice and equality for all.

(The Chairman)

The struggle of the women of South Africa has been protracted indeed. Thirty-five years ago, many women in demand of their rights defied the forces of oppression and State enforcement agents to challenge the pass laws emplaced by the apartheid regime. Their demonstration, undertaken against all odds, was an expression of their courage and determination not to remain subservient to injustice or to racially motivated legislation. Over the past decade, this struggle has continued. Girls have grown to become women but have faced and continue to suffer the same oppression as their mothers had known. Indeed, as women, as blacks and as workers, women have been subjected to an inferior status, the status of minors, in their own country.

The women of South Africa deserve our salute and respect. They have selflessly borne the brunt of apartheid. They have led many successful struggles against forced removal. They have headed households in the absence of their husbands, who were in prison, in exile or under restrictions. They have become an integral part of the labour force. And they have carried out their fight in the face of draconian measures and laws that took no cognizance of their dignity and courage. But, in all, the oppressed women of South Africa have found fortitude in the hope for a better tomorrow. It is hardly imaginable that the history of a new South Africa could ever be written without a prominent role and place being accorded to the women of South Africa. And although not victimized materially by apartheid, many white women have also joined the struggle and through protest and other actions have been contributing to the creation of a new South Africa.

This year's commemoration is taking place at a significant juncture in the overall struggle to eradicate apartheid. As members are aware, in spite of recent political developments in South Africa and of our collective hope

(The Chairman)

for the emergence of a non-racial South Africa, inequalities and deprivation continue to be endured by women under apartheid.

Today, 35 years after the initial women's protest against the pass laws, we behold a new circumstance in South Africa. Though not yet a full realization of the eradication of apartheid, it is an era in which South African women can look back and rightly say: "Yes, we have come a long way indeed." But we have much farther to go. The equality of women in public and private life in South Africa is not yet at hand.

The future of South Africa looks hopeful but the road to reach it is covered with difficulties. What has been so far achieved in South Africa has not been attained in isolation, neither by South Africans alone nor by the international community alone. It is the combination of the internal struggle and external pressure that has allowed the possibility of a new South Africa as envisaged in the United Nations Declaration.

The fundamental objective of the anti-apartheid struggle has always been to eradicate apartheid laws and to replace them with a new constitution in a unitary, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. That goal is far from being achieved. In spite of the many positive steps that have been taken, negotiations for a new constitution have yet to start, nor is there an agreement on transitional arrangements or on the mechanisms for the drawing up of a new constitution.

In addition to the outstanding issues of the release of the remaining political prisoners and the return of the political exiles without restriction, the recent disclosures of the covert funding of Inkhata by the authorities are clouding the prospects for speedy negotiations at this stage. The Special Committee was not surprised by the recent revelations. All along

(The Chairman)

it has pointed out that it appeared that the authorities were following a strategy aimed at weakening the African National Congress of South Africa. On 8 May this year, the Special Committee called this policy "dangerous and self-destructive".

These revelations, as well as the continuing violence, which is not unrelated to the covert activities, show that the process of political change in South Africa is at a fragile stage that requires a very cautious approach by the international community. It is therefore regrettable that, at this juncture of the struggle, a number of States have decided to lift certain important sanctions imposed on South Africa. We hold firmly to the view that to lift sanctions now, as some have done, is premature. True, key apartheid laws have been repealed, but the repeal of those laws does not repeal the legacies of the obnoxious system of apartheid. Most important of all, the majority of the people of South Africa still cannot vote. The negotiations on a new constitution have not yet started and President De Klerk has not agreed to the proposed interim government to take charge of the transition towards a new South Africa.

Ths Special Committee has consistently stressed the necessity of maintaining pressure on South Africa until a new constitution is adopted in that country. It agrees with the Organization of African Unity, which in its statement made in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 1991 said:

> "We further reaffirm the decisive importance of sanctions in moving South Africa forward towards a non-racial democracy and are convinced that it will be necessary to continue to use this form of pressure until the system of apartheid has been ended."

(The Chairman)

As the process of change unfolds, the Special Committee will be reviewing the issue of the necessary pressure that would be applied through the various stages of the process. We shall also articulate and pursue a programme of assistance to the victims of apartheid.

We reaffirm our solidarity with South Africans, and particularly with their women, whom we honour today. And we stand with South African women who say: "The commitment of the women of my community is my commitment - to stand side by side with our menfolk and our children in this long struggle to liberate ourselves and to bring about peace and justice for all in a country we love so deeply."

It is now my honour to invite Mr. Sotirios Mousouris, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Centre Against Apartheid, to read a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Mr. MOUSOURIS (Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Centre Against Apartheid): The Secretary-General's statement reads as follows:

"The women of South Africa, whose struggle for freedom, justice and equality we commemorate today, have borne a heavy burden over decades under the system of apartheid. They have faced an immense challenge - often as heads of families - to preserve the social fabric and instil in their children the ethics of work and the love of justice. In resisting forced removals, they have demonstrated their resilience against adversity. Their continuous demand for equality in the workplace and in public life is still not fulfilled. Yet hope is on the horizon, as a new South Africa, of which generations have dreamt, begins to emerge.

(Mr. Mousouris)

"This year the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women in South Africa is observed at a time which holds great promise. The process under way in that country should lead, through negotiations, to a constitution that will provide for a united, non-racial and democratic society.

"The recent repeal of most of the basic legal structures of apartheid, the implementation of many measures considered necessary to create a climate conducive to negotiations, the broad convergence of the major protagonists' visions of a new South Africa, are undoubtedly positive steps. On the other hand, persisting violence, the lingering issues of the release of all political prisoners and the return of exiles without restrictions and the current crisis of confidence generated by recent disclosures are obstructing the way forward.

"At the present juncture it is imperative that the remaining obstacles be swiftly removed and an atmosphere of confidence restored. Firm action by the South African Government to inspire a measure of trust in all the citizens of the country and to restore their confidence in it as a future negotiating partner is essential for the success of the process towards a new South Africa. It is now time for all the parties concerned, as soon as the remaining obstacles have been removed, to engage in good-faith negotiations regarding the drafting of a new constitution and the modalities for the transition to a democratic order.

"At the same time, it is of the utmost importance that the glaring socio-economic inequalities be promptly addressed, lest they make the process more difficult. I have in mind the crisis in education and housing, as well as serious problems in health-care delivery, conditions

(Mr. Mousouris)

of work and employment. It is such inequalities that have particularly victimized the women of South Africa, and it is in this area that the solidarity of the international community with them can best be manifested.

"Assistance to the women of South Africa will contribute to the stability and progress of their country. Material, educational and financial assistance will promote the peaceful transformation of the political, economic and social environment in South Africa.

"In conclusion, I believe I express the feelings of all those present in paying special tribute to the women of South Africa for their courageous struggle to achieve a better life for their children and their country. In so doing, they are making a critical contribution to building a new South Africa and fulfilling one of the major goals of the United Nations."

The CHAIRMAN: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Isaac Ayewah, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Nigeria, to make a statement on behalf of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity.

Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria): It is a distinct honour for me to convey to the Special Committee on behalf of the Nigerian President and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), General Ibrahim Babangida, warmest greetings on this occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women in South Africa.

The history of the African people is a history of continuing struggle. Countless African lives have been lost in that struggle. The battles that Africa has fought for liberation, freedom and independence will go down as the triumph of the human spirit in the twentieth century.

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

This International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women in South Africa is indeed auspicious. It comes in the wake of the seventh session of the OAU Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State and Government on Southern Africa, which has just concluded its meeting in Abuja, Nigeria.

The OAU Ad Hoc Committee reiterated the view firmly held by African Governments and peoples that sanctions against South Africa should not be lifted until the international community is fully satisfied that an irreversible process of fundamental change in South Africa is in place. That process of change has not begun, because the undemocratic constitution remains in place, and the fundamental question of negotiations and modalities for a non-racial and democratic constitution have not yet been addressed.

The Internal Security Act, which gives the regime the right to arrest and detain people at will, and a host of other laws continue to proscribe freedom and political activity, and thus reinforce the apartheid system. More seriously, many political prisoners remain incarcerated, while many exiles have not yet been allowed to return.

We note with regret the premature lifting of sanctions against South Africa on the part of some Western Governments, and urge all other Governments not to follow this course of action. The lifting of sanctions at this point will only embolden the die-hard elements in apartheid South Africa, frustrate the process of negotiations and thus prolong the transfer of power.

We wish to reiterate here and now that the unilateral lifting of sanctions is a violation of the consensus United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. Apartheid is abhorrent because it is evil. Those who give it comfort encourage its ruthlessness.

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

The international community must remain vigilant. The recent revelations that the regime has been funding the black-on-black violence in South Africa is one more reason why economic sanctions should not be lifted. The lack of sincerity and seriousness of purpose on the part of the regime is a manifestation of its determination to rule, at all costs.

We affirm very strongly that the central issue at this stage of the struggle against apartheid is the "transfer of power" and the establishment of a democratic government in South Africa. This is a matter of urgency, and we call upon the international community to continue to exert all forms of pressure on the regime in South Africa to secure an end to this last vestige of colonialism in the continent.

The Pretoria regime must, without delay, adopt a democratic mechanism of an elected constituent assembly and accept the formation of an interim administration which would draw up a democratic non-racial constitution. The constitution should also guarantee the principle of universal suffrage.

As we stand in solidarity today with the women of South Africa as women in development, let us pledge anew our support and commitment that we will continue to exert every pressure on President de Klerk and his Government, until the fundamental rights of all South Africans - including the right to vote - are fully guaranteed in a new democratic constitution.

The international community cannot do less than ensure that the process of negotiation moves forward. Let us give the women of South Africa and the liberation movement, the support they need in this last battle against racism, violence and injustice.

The CHAIRMAN: The Special Committee had extended an invitation to Mrs. Joyce Dinkins to participate in this meeting. As many of you know, Mrs. Dinkins has always supported the aspirations of South African women for

(The Chairman)

freedom and equality. She, as the first lady of New York City and as a citizen of the United States, has also contributed to the firm position taken by this great city in solidarity with the people of South Africa.

Unfortunately, due to her sudden illness, Mrs. Dinkins cannot be with us today. On behalf of the Special Committee and on my own behalf, I wish her a speedy recovery. Mrs. Dinkins has requested the Deputy Counsel of New York City, Ms. Elsie Crum, to read a statement on her behalf.

Ms. CRUM: Mrs. Dinkins has asked me to express to you her sincere regret that an illness has prevented her from being with you today on this important occasion.

On behalf of the Mayor and Mrs. Dinkins and the men and women of the city of New York I am honoured to join this distinguished gathering of anti-apartheid leaders from around the world.

On Mrs. Dinkin's behalf, I am especially pleased to greet Mrs. Gertrude Shope, President of the African National Congress Women's League, and Mrs. Elizabeth Rejoice Sibeko, Secretary for the Women and Children's Affairs Section of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania. Both are leaders whose lifelong struggle for justice and equality have brought the South African nation to the current turning-point in the movement for a democratic post-apartheid society.

On Mrs. Dinkin's behalf I also extend the city's warm wishes to Ambassador Gambari, the representative of Nigeria, and to all who have come to this joyous celebration of South African womanhood.

As we navigate this critical juncture in the struggle for a free South Africa, it is as important as ever that we join in commemoration of the tremendous accomplishments and sacrifices of South African women. In every

(Ms. Crum)

field of battle against apartheid - in education and housing, in civic government and business development, in armed struggle and in efforts to stop the dreadful violence that is dividing the African people of the country - women have carried more than their share. This record of accomplishment cannot be underestimated and must always be acknowledged so that when true democracy dawns in South Africa, it will be rich with meaning for women, with firm resolve against all forms of racism and sexism.

Mrs. Dinkins will be travelling to South African with the Mayor in September. They are very much looking forward to meeting and talking firsthand with their South African sisters to reaffirm and offer their continued support in this ongoing struggle. I am delighted to be representing Mrs. Dinkins at this thirty-fifth anniversary of our sisters' protest against the Pretoria regime's infamous pass laws.

For decades, women in New York have followed the pioneering role that South African women have played in the struggle. We have been inspired beyond words by their bravery and their dedication to freedom and justice. While the Bush Administration has seen fit to indulge the de Klerk Government by prematurely lifting American trade sanctions against South Africa, many local cities, including New York, see the reality of South Africa much more clearly. We know that without continued pressure, the movement for change will be undermined. The Mayor has promised to hold the line on sanctions against South Africa until, in the judgement of the anti-apartheid leadership, fundamental change has finally been achieved.

Thank you for asking Mrs. Dinkins to be a part of this historic occasion. I know that will all her heart she welcomes you to the City of New York and offers you her continued respect, her prayers and her undying support.

The CHAIRMAN: The next special guest is Mrs. Gertrude Shope. Mrs. Shope has recorded brilliant achievements both in the field of education and as a political leader in her own right within the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC). She joined the Congress at the end of 1954 and is now the leader of the Women's League and a member of its National Executive Committee.

Mrs. SHOPE (African National Congress of South Africa (ANC)): It is a singular honour and privilege for me, on behalf of the ANC Women's League, and in the name of the people of South Africa, to address this Committee marking the International Day of Solidarity with the struggle of the women of South Africa.

I also wish to thank the Special Committee for the kind invitation extended to the ANC Women's League enabling us to be present at this meeting and share with the representatives of the international community our concerns, hopes and aspirations for our country - South Africa.

This gesture comes as no suprise since it is common knowledge that over the years, the Special Committee has not only given invaluable support to us but it has also played a pivotal role in mobilizing the entire United Nations system and the international community against apartheid. Our people will remain forever indebted for the Committee's unswerving support.

I should also like to take this opportunity to place on record the profound gratitude of the National Executive Committee of the ANC for the very positive manner in which the Special Committee responded to our invitation to attend our historic conference which was held inside South Africa for the first time in thirty years.

The ANC felt greatly honoured that the Special Committee saw fit to be represented at the highest level through its Chairman, His Excellency Professor Gambari. Ambassador Gambari's message to our conference served as

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

a great source of inspiration not only to the thousands of delegates, but also to our people as a whole reflecting, as it did, the unequivocal support of the United Nations for our just struggle. There can be no doubt that such assistance will be even more critical as we enter the decisive phase of transforming our country from an apartheid State to a non-racial and non-sexist democracy.

The relevant declaration by the United Nations General Assembly in 1984 which occasioned the annual observance of 9 August was not only a recognition by the world body of the courageous role played by our women in the struggle against oppression in all its forms, but also provided the opportunity for us to pay a fitting tribute to the heroines of our liberation struggle. On this occasion, we salute our women fighters - those who are celebrated world wide as well as those who are unknown and unsung in our urban ghettos and villages, those who are still languishing in the regime's dungeons and those who are still forced to remain in exile.

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

On this occasion, we dip our revolutionary banner in memory of all our departed heroines. We draw strength and inspirations from their lives' work, and reinforce ourselves for the challenges lying ahead.

Viewed from the perspective of the complex contemporary political reality of South Africa and present-day international relations, there can be no doubt that this year's observance of 9 August assumes a greater significance. Against a backdrop of a kaleidoscope of political activity in South Africa, a number of pertinent questions are emerging from within South Africa itself and from abroad.

Of great interest is whether we will soon be seeing a democratic South Africa emerging from the ashes of the apartheid State. More specifically, it will be of great interest to know what the prospects are for a negotiated settlement in South Africa in the light of the disclosures on, firstly, the secret funding by the regime of the Inkatha Freedom Party and its allied union, UWUSA, the United Workers' Union of South Africa, in order for them to serve as counterweights against the anti-apartheid forces and, notably, the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU); and, secondly, the overwhelming evidence linking the South African Defence Force to the violence that has been overtaking South African society and which has, to date, claimed more than 10,000 lives.

Also, do the anti-apartheid forces have the capacity, individually or collectively, to present themselves as a credible alternative to the Pretoria regime? In other words, are they organizationally strong enough to challenge the established parties? Do they have the capacity and political will to form a united front? Do they have a realistic political platform? For example,

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

are the calls for an interim goverment and a constituent assembly realizable? Is there sufficient clarity on the role of the international community, notably on sanctions? All of these are legitimate questions which, we humbly submit, must be addressed, not only in order to provide the requisite clarity, but also to enhance the fighting capacity of all those arrayed against apartheid and for the speedy establishment of democracy in our country. We shall, therefore, crave your indulgence in order to deal with them, albeit very briefly.

As regards the organizational strength of the ANC, this Committee will be happy to know that both the ANC Women's League and the ANC as a whole have just emerged from their respective, historic conferences. These forums provided the opportunity to examine, in a most critical manner, each organization's strengths and weaknesses.

The Women's League came out of its April conference as determined to give battle to the regime as were the South African women on 9 August 1956, when 20,000 of them marched on the citadel of apartheid, Pretoria. Barely a year since the unbanning of the ANC, the ANC Women's League has emerged as a very important contingent in the struggle for democracy in South Africa. As an integral part of the liberation forces and also in its own right, it has spearheaded important anti-apartheid campaigns nationwide.

The ANC, at its 48th national conference, held in Durban in July this year, had the opportunity to sum up its experiences, spanning many decades, and to carry out an in-depth study of the political challenges lying ahead. The restructuring of its leading committees to cover three broad segments, namely, the political, policy and service organs, was designed precisely to address the current demands of our struggle.

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

Equally important, the ANC conference provided a platform for animated debates on issues such as strategy and tactics, negotiations, a new constitutional dispensation, affirmative action in favour of women, foreign policy and the post-apartheid social, economic and political order. Clearly, therefore, from an organizational standpoint, the ANC has taken some important steps in eliminating its weaknesses and towards gearing itself for a vital role in the transformation of South Africa.

The recently held fourth congress of COSATU, a leading trade union federation and an important member of our alliance, also undertook a similar exercise with a great measure of success.

With regard to the issue of a united front, or the patriotic front of the oppressed, it is instructive to note that both the ANC, at its national conference, and COSATU, at its recent congress, adopted resolutions underlining the importance of such a front, and thus endorsed the preparations already under way for a meeting, which, it is envisaged, will lead to the creation of a front. In this regard, we are happy to state that the meeting has now been scheduled to take place in September. It was postponed from August in order to allow for wider consultations.

Allow me now to turn to the question of negotiations, in the light of the recent political scandal involving the secret funding of Inkatha. Whatever the so-called "Inkathagate" scandal may or may not have done, and whatever the regime may say in an effort to exercise damage control, two issues emerge with crystal clarity.

First, the scandal has vindicated the long-standing concern that the regime in its dealings with the ANC has been pursuing a double agenda. Consider the question of Namibia as a backdrop: despite the fact that the

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

regime was a signatory to the international accord signed at these very Headquarters of the United Nations, to the accord called the New York agreement - which also included Cuba and Angola - and despite the fact that the accord explicitly precluded the States parties to the agreement from interfering with the political process leading to independence, the regime, by its own admission, provided about 100 million rand to anti-SWAPO formations simply because, in the words of the regime's Foreign Minister, "we did not like SWAPO".

The contempt for international accords which is being displayed by the Pretoria regime is nothing new. Only a few years ago, in 1984, the regime signed the Nkomati accord with Mozambique. The accord stipulated that the Mozambican Government would cease its assistance to the ANC whilst Pretoria would stop all aid to RENAMO.

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

Evidence subsequently collected at the RENAMO base in Gorongosa proved that even as P.W. Botha was signing the accord at Nkomati the then Deputy Minister of Information, Louis Nell, was landing secretly and illegally on Mozambican territory with military supplies for RENAMO.

That the regime has a double agenda has also been clearly manifested in its secret funding of Inkatha against the ANC, whilst talking to the ANC. The regime's defence on this issue is as irrelevant as it is childish. To argue that they were justified in funding Inkatha because the ANC was receiving millions of dollars from abroad is to ignore the fact that whatever support the ANC was receiving and continues to receive from abroad it is in the context of those countries making their contribution to the struggle against what has been internationally condemned as a crime against humanity. Therefore, such support is consistent, rather than at variance, with their international obligations. In any event, there has never been anything furtive or secretive about such assistance - let alone any allegation of abuse of taxpayers' money.

The equally devastating disclosures regarding the role of the special forces within the South African Defence Force, concerning the question of violence, further reveal that double agenda of the régime. Participants will no doubt have heard ANC representatives at various gatherings arguing insistently that the so-called black-on-black violence was orchestrated violence by a third force within the security establishment in South Africa. In spite of the denial by the regime's spokesmen, including De Klerk himself, there is overwhelming evidence, collected from actual participants, that the random killings in trains and at funeral gatherings were being planned and executed by security forces based in military camps such as Palaboro.

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

In a feeble attempt to explain why there were foreigners in the South African Defence Force special forces - a fact which the regime had always denied - De Klerk would now have the world believe that they were needed for their expertise as trackers: that they were highly essential to the Defence Force in order to help track down cattle thieves.

The second point about this political scandal is that it has destroyed the credibility of the regime - certainly, in our view, as part of a future negotiation process. By the admission of De Klerk himself, the scandal has adversely affected the climate for negotiations.

Under the circumstances, therefore, it would seem that the ANC ought to address itself as clearly as possible with respect to the way forward. First, the ANC remains fully committed to the process of negotiations to bring about democratic transformation in South Africa. Secondly, the regime, instead of preoccupying itself with efforts aimed at covering up its role in the scandal, would be better employed in earnestly seeking to restore faith in its commitment to negotiations.

Prior to the televised press conference by De Klerk, the ANC proposed the following steps, amongst others: full disclosure of all such covert assistance and its immediate termination; dismissal of Defence Minister Malan and Law and Order Minister Vlok; and establishment of a multiparty commission of inquiry into the allegations of security-services involvement in violence.

Failure by De Klerk to address our concerns has added some weight to the argument that it is the regime itself that poses a serious obstacle to negotiations. This has therefore added a sense of urgency to our demand for an interim government, since the regime has demonstrated by its actions that

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it is quite incapable of overseeing the democratic transformations in South Africa in an even-handed manner.

In that regard, all our demands remain valid. Furthermore, the sooner the all-party conference takes place and decides, inter alia, on the transitional arrangements, the better. Such transitional arrangements would, in our view, properly oversee the establishment of rules and mechanisms for the drafting of the new constitution, the election of a democratic parliament, and the establishment of a democratic government.

In all those processes, it is our considered view that the international community cannot just be a disinterested spectator. On the contrary, we maintain that the world can act in a manner that will have a positive impact on the process. It is an incontestable fact that it was pressure from both inside and outside South Africa that forced the regime to accept the negotiation option. It would be extremely helpful to the process under way in South Africa for the Governments of the world not to relax any pressure on the regime. Even those Governments that took De Klerk at face value and were inclined to act rather hastily in lifting sanctions must, in the light of the recent disclosure, be a little more circumspect.

From this rostrum we therefore launch an appeal to the peoples of the world, through their representatives gathered here. In doing so we go back to the questions we raised earlier. Is South Africa headed towards a democratic transformation in the near future? Do the anti-apartheid forces present a credible alternative?

That South Africa will be free and democratic there can be no doubt. Nor can there be any doubt that the democratic perspective of the anti-apartheid forces, as embodied in the Harare and the United Nations Declarations, is

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shared by the majority of the peoples of the world. The question how soon the actual transformations will occur will be answered, in the main, on the ground in South Africa.

But it is also true that in great measure the support of the international community will be critical. It is important to remember that whatever else might have happened in South Africa we still have a white minority regime firmly in place, commanding enormous resources to ensure that political change benefits primarily the white minority.

It should also be recalled that the ANC and other democratic forces are still faced with the problem of thousands of returning political exiles and thousands of released political prisoners who of necessity must be integrated into society. Then there is the question of the thousands of street children victims of apartheid, some of whom were orphaned during the lengthy political turbulance that characterized our country. Thus, the problems of housing, education, health and social welfare for the thousands of victims of apartheid cannot await a political dispensation, but need to be addressed right now. For this, we desperately need the assistance of members, both as the United Nations system and as States Members of the United Nations.

The Pretoria regime, in seeking to minimize the "Inkathagate" scandal, has been at pains to contrast the millions received by the ANC abroad with the 1.5 million rand given to UWUSA and the approximately 200,000 rand given to Inkatha. This is clearly intended to suggest that the ANC has an unfair advantage and therefore does not require any more assistance.

(Mrs. Shope, ANC)

What it does not say is that the ANC's adversary is not so much Inkatha as itself, and that therefore, if there is to be any comparison of the respective budgets of the adversaries, we should examine the billions of rands that Pretoria has committed over the years to the destruction of the ANC as well as the billions of dollars that are at their disposal simply to ensure that the regime remains in power.

The truth is that the ANC and the democratic movement urgently require your assistance in order to ensure that they can give an effective challenge to the Pretoria regime. Such assistance will go a long way towards ensuring that we give an effective challenge to the regime and that South Africa is speedily transformed into a democracy.

We cannot conclude before we, ourselves needy of support, express our unequivocal solidarity with, and support for, all those who, like us, are fighting with great sacrifice for their self-determination. On this occasion, we wish to salute the people of Palestine, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization, who are daily engaging Zionist Israel in serious battles in order to raise their cherished ideal of a free Palestine. We wish to pay a tribute particularly to the women of Palestine, who have in many ways served as a source of inspiration to the women in our own struggle. We sincerely hope that the much-awaited international conference will be a reality and that it will give impetus to a solution of the wider Middle East question.

Similarly, we salute the people of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic and express confidence that their issue will be resolved sooner rather than later. For our part, as members of the ANC and the ANC Women's League, we shall leave no stone unturned to ensure that South Africa becomes truly non-racial, truly non-sexist and truly democratic.

The CHAIRMAN: I now have the pleasure to invite another special guest, Mrs. Elizabeth Sibeko, who is the Secretary for Women's and Children's Affairs of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), to make a statement. Mrs. Sibeko is well known to members of the Special Committee. She was a member of the PAC delegation to the Special Committee before assuming her present responsibilities. She has always been an active member of the PAC.

Mrs. SIBEKO (Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)): On behalf of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the custodian of the genuine aspirations of the dispossessed, oppressed and exploited but struggling people of Azania, I greet the Special Committee. Since the establishment of 9 August as the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of the Women of Azania (South Africa), we of the PAC have always enjoyed participating in the observance of this Day. For that we are grateful to the Special Committee against Apartheid.

When the United Nations realized in 1975 that nearly three quarters of the world's population was represented by women, and that despite that fact, this section of the human population was still oppressed, discriminated against and exploited, and their contribution to society not given proper recognition, it decided to call a world conference on women, which was referred to as the United Nations Decade for Women, to try honestly to observe, study and address this anomalous situation. The theme of the Decade was "Equality, Development and Peace".

We emphasize the fact that our struggle in occupied Azania is for national liberation and self-determination. The United Nations Charter spells out unambiguously that self-determination is an inalienable right of every nation on the face of the Earth - the right to determine one's destiny. Azania is no exception. That is why we have waged the struggle over 300 years

(Mrs. Sibeko, PAC)

against the dispossessor and oppressor in Azania. That is why there has been resistance by the oppressed in that country, such as the Bambatha insurrection; the battle of Isandlwana; the Positive Action Campaign led by the PAC on 21 March 1960, which led to the Sharpeville Massacre; the 1976 student uprising known as the Soweto uprising; and subsequent national uprisings.

These were all a result of the correct analysis of the struggle in our country, a struggle we have analysed as anti-colonialism. We have not had a smooth reception from those quarters who have simply analysed our struggle as one against mere racial discrimination characterized by the policies of apartheid. The latter analysis of our struggle simply says that once apartheid laws and discriminative policies have been removed, then the process will permit everybody to participate freely in the affairs of their country.

The reality of the situation is that the obnoxious apartheid-colonial system, which has been universally discredited and branded as a crime against humanity, must be completely dismantled and a completely new society must emerge. The situation demands a fundamental change.

It has been said that one of the greatest conflicts in our country - the issue of land - recently had its Acts of 1913 and 1936 repealed. These two Acts - the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts - had deprived the indigenous Africans of 87 per cent of the arable land. In the process, the Africans were overcrowded into 13 per cent of the most barren and infertile land. This part of Azania was cut up into small pieces known as the Bantustans or homelands. We, the Azanian people, want to know what exactly the repeal of the Land Acts means to us, the dispossessed? Is the racist regime repealing the Acts so that the dispossessed African majority's landlessness will be redressed through redistribution? Or is it going to be left to the market forces to give the

(Mrs. Sibeko, PAC)

land to the highest bidder? These vital questions remain crucial to the overwhelming landless majority of our people.

Connected to the land question is the squatter situation in our country. The squatters are everywhere and they live in appalling conditions. Today is the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of the Women of Azania. The most affected part of the population in the squatter issue is made up of women and their families, who are ruthlessly uprooted from their homes and thrown into the middle of nowhere in the midst of poverty, despair and homelessness.

As recently as last month, the City Press of 14 July 1991 reported a sad story of squatters in the Vaal area, on a farm called Orange Farm near Evaton, where scores of people were bulldozed from the shacks they were living in. The paper carried a picture of a young woman in the late stages of pregnancy, whose shack, like so many others, had been bulldozed out of existence by none other than the Transvaal Provincial Administration using the police. In another similar incident, 60 homes were razed to the ground without prior warning. One homeless shack dweller remarked:

> "Officials told us that if we paid 100 rands to the Provincial Administration, we would be allocated sites in Orange Farm's Extension 3. Whilst we were still waiting for the officials to come back to us, we were suddenly pounced upon by hundreds of police and Administration vehicles at about 9 a.m. Friday and ordered off the land. A bulldozer was brought in and flattened most of the shacks, leaving people's belongings scattered all over the place."

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In yet another similar incident in the Cape, 19 people were arrested for refusing to move from the land on which they were squatting, as they had nowhere to go - as if kicking around homeless squatters were not enough, Africans met with physical resistance and verbal threats in public places where the Separate Amenities Act had previously been in force.

These incidents fly in the face of the so-called changes in South Africa. The South African press is full of reports of racial confrontation between Africans and whites, especially with the police, in places such as parks, swimming pools and so on. I am trying here to paint the real picture of what is happening in our country for the benefit of those who are impatient, for those who think that a system which has rightly been condemned as a crime against humanity can be reformed. This, bear in mind, is after de Klerk's grand tour of the world to try to convince it that apartheid is now dead.

This reformist posture of de Klerk's seeks to relax international prsessure on the regime's economy. Despite their pronouncements to the contrary, economic and financial sanctions imposed on the regime have been hitting the economy very hard, to a point where they had undermined investors' confidence. We thus regret that President Bush has lifted the anti-apartheid sanctions sponsored by Congress against the regime in 1986. We, the Azanian people, feel that no lifting of any kind of sanction should be put into effect as long as the regime's State machinery, that is, its political, military, economic and social power, is still intact. We feel that no sanction should be lifted until Azanian women, who are a part of the women of the world, are able to participate freely as human beings in the affairs of their country, so that, together with other women from all over the world, they are able to

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address women's issues under the theme of the United Nations Decade for Women, which is equality, development and peace.

That situation can be realized if F. W. de Klerk is honest enough to allow a constituent assembly to be called. This is the only democratic formula that would usher in liberation and freedom on the basis of one person, one vote on a common voters' roll in a non-racial and democratic Azania. Our primary objective is the complete dismantling of apartheid by bringing about a new constitution which will have been written by elected representatives or delegates through a constituent assembly. This is the democratic formula the PAC proposes.

On the other hand, F. W. de Klerk proposes that the new constitution should be drawn up by invited participants through a multi-party conference. The criterion put forward here, proven support - whatever that means - is unacceptable to us and the overwhelming majority of the oppressed. It is undemocratic, to say the least. Participation in the constituent assembly should be proportional to the percentage of votes a political party receives. This democratic solution would ensure the participation of all.

Addressing the joint ANC/PAC National Executive Committee meeting at the opening ceremony of a united front between the two organizations in Harare, Zimbabwe on 15 April 1991, President Clarence Makwethu, National President of the Pan Africanist Congress, stated, referring to the constituent assembly,

> "This democratic formula enjoys growing support at grass-root level in our country. The PAC National Congress adopted it; the ANC Consultative Congress adopted it. On 1 February 1991, a quarter of a million people marched in Cape Town, Pretoria and Soweto, demanding the establishment of an elected constituent assembly as the only democratic way of ushering in genuine democracy in our country".

(Mrs. Sibeko, PAC)

This is the genuine demand of the overwhelming majority in Azania. The Azanian women who are observing this solemn occasion today are part and parcel of that overwhelming majority of the oppressed. To us, the struggling women of Azania, the importance of ushering in genuine democracy in Azania on the basis of one person, one vote on a common voters' roll cannot be over-emphasised.

In my earlier remarks I referred to the theme of the United Nations Decade for Women, which is equality, development and peace. But there are prerequisites for this important theme. In Azania, women have been denied all the above. Peace, which we consider to be very important to a people and its country, has never existed there, in my country.

This leads us to the serious issue plaguing Azania at this very moment, the issue of violence. The violence which is in the African community in occupied Azania looks to the outsider like black-on-black violence; yet we, the Azanian people, have proved beyond reasonable doubt that this violence is State-sponsored. It is violence that flows directly and indirectly from the policy and programme of the racist regime. We have no doubt that this violence is the same violence that was used by the regime to destabilize the front-line States. It is indeed an inverse destabilization programme against the liberation movement as a whole: thus this great stratagem to try and prove that despite the unbanning of the liberation movements, they have failed to maintain order in the townships, which therefore serves as proof to de Klerk and his supporters that the national liberation movements cannot be a contending force to run the affairs of the country.

The escalating violence has baffled our people in the way it is carried out. The violence is programmed, judiciously controlled and cleverly

(Mrs. Sibeko, PAC)

orchestrated. It has the hallmark of military-commando-type operations and efficiency. The regime is using foreign elements to carry out their dirty work. They employ the services of well-motivated agents in the State apparatus, such as Buffalo Battalion 32, Koevoet, CCB, right-wing paramilitary groups, Askaris, and so on. These mercenaries come from war-torn Angola, Mozambique and Namibia. They carry out their atrocities without any feeling.

Recent revelations involving Adrian Vlok, Magnus Malan the Defence Minister and Pik Botha the Foreign Minister further discredit the regime's recently built image. Do the friends of the regime view de Klerk as the man who has brought meaningful change and deserves reward?

The Azanian women appeal to the international community to maintain sanctions, and to those countries which have relaxed or lifted the ban to rethink their actions until a genuine change, under a new constitution drawn up on the basis of one person, one vote, comes about.

In conclusion, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Women's Department appeals for assistance to support projects inside Azania to be run by its women. To give a few offhand examples, the women plan to run a bakery as an income-generating project, a silk-screening and fabric-printing project, a health project in the rural areas that would be run by its own medical team, a nursery and pre-school project, a child-care centre, a poultry and livestock farm project, a shoe-making project, and transport to assist in those projects. In addition to these projects, the women appeal for fellowships, especially in the field of science and technology and in vocational training.

The CHAIRMAN: I invite Mrs. Maha Giacaman Khoury, representative of the Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations, to make a statement.

Mrs. KHOURY (Palestine): The Palestine Observer Mission to the United Nations is proud and honoured to be here today expressing our solidarity and sisterhood with the women of South Africa in their struggle against racism, discrimination and the illegal apartheid system.

Women in South Africa have suffered a tremendous amount of repression and exploitation as a result of apartheid. This suffering has manifested itself in their imprisonment, destruction of their family units, in physical and psychological torture, economic repression and poverty, disease due to lack of health care. In essence, the policy of apartheid denies the black majority in South Africa the basic elements of human rights, not to mention the denial of their right to self-determination.

(Mrs. Khoury, Palestine)

Women in South Africa did not remain silent in the face of this racist policy. They took to the streets, protesting the atrocities committed against their people; they became an active and integral part of their national liberation movement; they organized themselves as women and, hand in hand with their brothers, involved themselves in trade unions and took up the issues of their struggle in all its aspects - social, economic and political. Women in South Africa are very well aware of the fact that if they are to gain their freedom as women, their people as a whole has to be free.

Needless to say, Palestinian women are also suffering the cruel and harsh conditions of Israel's illegal racist occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Israel, the occupying Power, continues to occupy Palestinian territory and continues to exercise its racist and inhumane practices against the Palestinian people. Israel's behaviour is a direct violation not only of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 but also of the the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

At this juncture I would like to make reference to a series of articles that was published in the Washington Post on 4, 5 and 6 August 1991, which gives an accurate description of the conditions of the Palestinians, in particular in the Gaza area. I would like to quote briefly from the article published on 4 August:

> "Khan Younis, Gaza Strip - On the second day of the Muslim feast of sacrifice known as Adha, Suad Tibi, 35, a nurse and the mother of seven, took her own life. She drank half a bottle of insecticide at midnight and staggered to her death in the hot, humid hallway of her home.

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"The next day, mourners and neighbours nodded to one another that she had died with her secret. But there are no secrets in Gaza. The Tibis are poor and forsaken, living in squalid quarters in the camp of Khan Younis on the Gaza Strip, where even the grey sand seems to be rotting in the sun.

"Suad Tibi was one of Gaza's victims - a symbol of a Palestinian community that, in its poverty and hopelessness after 24 years of Israeli occupation, is literally tearing itself apart.

"Suad Tibi finally escaped from Gaza. Her portrait reveals that she was a woman of delicate features, with an ivory complexion and huge brown eyes. On the night of June 23 she was alone with her sadness. The men in her family were all dead, deported or in jail. Her husband, an ex-prisoner, had been blown up in a car while planning a guerrilla operation in 1986. Her brother was shot by Israeli soldiers during a demonstration at Bir Zeit University; another was killed in an air raid in southern Lebanon, and another was fatally wounded in the 1967 war."

I am sure that many here, after hearing this, will find that bitter and harsh reality devastating. This reality has been created by a savage monster known as the Israeli occupation. A similar bitter and harsh reality exists in South Africa and is affecting many women and children. But the question now arises: What is to be done to stop this menace, to stop this horrifying nightmare of racism and aggression?

Women of South Africa and Palestinian women continue to hold their heads up high while struggling for freedom and self-determination. They continue to be proud and dignified even in their death. But how long is the international

(Mrs. Khoury, Palestine)

community going to continue watching them suffering without taking concrete action to eliminate and end that suffering.

The women of Palestine wonder why of all the Security Council resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine not one has been implemented. Israel, the occupying Power, has not abided by any of those Security Council resolutions and has not been reprimanded for its defiance of the will of the international community. Rather it is continuing to evade the international community up to this very moment, by asking the United Nations - for the first time in the history of the Organization - to be mute.

The black majority in South Africa has made big strides in their struggle against apartheid and the racist regime of Pretoria. However, the illegal apartheid system still remains. Apartheid, like occupation, is the disease, and the international community should take action to dismantle it once and for all.

The time for the international community to act is now, to help the people of South Africa and the people of Palestine attain self-determination, independence and freedom.

In closing, the Palestine Liberation Organization, on behalf of the people of Palestine, extends its solidarity and salutes the women of South Africa and hopes that peace and justice will prevail not only for both our peoples but the world over.

The CHAIRMAN: On this solemn occasion, the Special Committee has received messages from the Heads of State or Government of the following countries: Ghana, Mali, Pakistan and Tunisia.

(The Chairman)

Furthermore, the Special Committee has received messages from the Governments or Ministers or Secretaries of Foreign Affairs of the following countries: Barbados, Cuba, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Guyana, Jamaica, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Peru, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu and Venezuela.

The Special Committee has also received messages from the following intergovernmental and international and national non-governmental organizations: the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

I propose that all those messages be issued as a document of the Special Committee against Apartheid, taking into account the usual financial implications. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Committee decides to accept that proposal.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: As we come to the end of our meeting today, I should like to express my appreciation, and that of the Special Committee, to our special guests and all other speakers for their contributions to the successful outcome of this meeting. Despite the encouraging developments in South Africa since our last meeting, women and children in South Africa are still suffering from the evils of apartheid and bear a very heavy burden in the struggle to eliminate the obnoxious system of apartheid.

Our meeting today has once again served as a strong message to them that the international community cares and that the world is on their side, a message that we are all determined to lend the fullest support to their legitimate struggle for freedom.

(The Chairman)

I ask all participants to join me now in observing a minute of silence in the memory of all, in particular the many women and children, innocent victims of apartheid, who have sacrificed their lives in the fight to create a South Africa free of apartheid and oppression.

The participants observed a minute of silence.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.